AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT:

Please amend the Abstract as follows:

A connection apparatus for a public network switching system includes line ports connected to user terminals and trunk ports connected to Internet lines, a switching unit having ~~multiple~~ diverging ports connected to the trunk ports ~~switching system~~ and ~~multiple~~ converging ports connected to the line ports ~~adapted for connection to a number of internet lines~~. A control unit receives a request signal from a user terminal and establishes ~~in the switching unit a set of branch~~ connections between one of the diverging ports and the converging ports which correspond to Internet ~~internet~~ lines specified by the request signal. The public network switching system connects the one diverging port to the user terminal and connects a line port and a trunk port, ~~where the diverging port is connected through a connection to the user terminal established in the switching system. The internet lines may be directly connected to the switching system. The control unit may request the switching system to establish multiple connections between the converging ports and the internet lines. Each of the converging ports may include a multiplexer for multiplexing a plurality of user signals into a signal for transmission to one of the internet lines and a demultiplexer for demultiplexing a signal from the internet line into a plurality of signals for application to the diverging ports.~~